

Venue:
Community

Goal:
Eliminating Exposure to
Secondhand Smoke

Activity:
C4.03 Policy
Education – Public
Venues & Worksites



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- **Population (Census 2000): 345,238**
- **Total Households (Census 2000): 127,208**
- **Adult Cigarette Smoking Prevalence (BRFSS/ATS 2003): 22 percent**
- **Estimated Number of Adult Cigarette Smokers (DOH 2004): 54,600**
- **Number of Students (OSPI 2003): 69,396**
- **Eighth Grade Cigarette Smoking Prevalence (HYS 2002): 10 percent**

Tobacco-free Parks – Clark County

Project Description

Clark County BREATHE, a tobacco prevention youth group, and the Clark County Health Department created a smoke-free parks sign and elicited city official support to establish voluntary tobacco-free zones in three cities.



Inputs

Rationale

The youth group BREATHE wanted to create a community awareness campaign to inform people that secondhand smoke hurts others around them and to ultimately reduce youth exposure to secondhand smoke. The county health department had received several complaints from community members about smoking at ball games and in city parks.

- About 50 percent of Clark County adults strongly agree that their city or town should establish as many strong rules and laws as possible to protect nonsmokers, especially children, from secondhand smoke.
- Smoking bans in public areas are recommended in the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Community Guide¹ as an effective method for decreasing exposure of secondhand smoke and increasing smoking cessation.

¹Community Guide to Preventative Services, Tobacco Use and Exposure, www.thecommunityguide.org

Target Audiences

- Primary: Adults who smoke around kids, especially in local parks
- Secondary: General public, elected officials

Resources

Staff

- Eight members from the BREATHE youth group
- One Clark County Health Department staff person
- The entire project took about 50 hours over two years.

Funding

- Funding provided through a grant from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and locally.
- \$500 for signs

Partnerships

- Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
- The cities of Ridgefield, Vancouver, and Battle Ground
- A youth coordinator from Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department supported the project in Vancouver and helps maintain the signs.

Activities

1. Two tobacco team members and three members of Clark County Health Department management met with the Clark County administrator, two county commissioners, and the city/county parks and recreation director to discuss designating voluntary smoke-free zones in county parks.
2. The parks and recreation director agreed to provide health department staff with contact information for organizations that use the ball fields so tobacco staff could provide secondhand smoke education.
3. BREATHE members met to discuss upcoming events for the contract year and determined that they wanted to ask cities to place voluntary smoke-free signs in city parks.
4. BREATHE won Campaign For Tobacco Free Kids award for the west region. Part of the award was a \$500 grant to be used on tobacco projects.
5. BREATHE members designed the signs and worked with a graphics firm to produce the signs with the correct governmental specifications.

Outputs

1. The youth group developed the design for the one sign and five signs were produced.
2. City council members in three cities agreed to let the signs be placed in their city parks.
3. One sign was posted in a Vancouver park and three signs were posted in Ridgefield parks. The number of signs to be erected in Battle Ground parks still is to be determined.
4. BREATHE members continue to work on getting smoke-free parks in all of Clark County cities.
5. A county tobacco staff person and two BREATHE members presented to a group of youth at the Yakima Prevention Conference on how to work with city council members to have smoke-free signs posted in city parks in their communities.
6. The local cable TV station broadcast the sign unveiling in the Vancouver and Ridgefield parks. A story was printed in the local Health Department newsletter and a press release was sent.

Evaluation

- Almost three-fifths of Clark County residents report smoking should be completely banned in outdoor public areas where children may be present. (56 percent \pm 6 percent, ATS 2003 preliminary data)

Lessons Learned

- Clark County officially would not support the idea to make all county parks smoke-free but individual cities did support this movement.
- The fact that this was a youth-generated project and that youth worked with the local elected officials made it a success.
- We would definitely recommend this project to others.

